



WORDS FROM  
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Nail It Down– Fly it High

“If they catch you at disadvantage ...  
so we fight them  
with our colors nailed to the mast.”  
- Sir Walter Scott 1821

“**Nailing your colors to the mast**” ... it’s a phrase that’s been left over from the days when ships sailed the high seas.

Each ship had her own flag. Her “color” was her flag. Generally these were military banners with special colors that identified a particular ship to a particular country. Usually each country adapted its own flag in color and design.

This color-coded system indicated who you belonged to and who you fought for. These colored flags flying from the mast made for easier identification on the waters. The only way to know if an approaching ship was a “friend” or a “foe” was by the color of the flag flying from its masts.

The phrase “**to show one’s real colors**” came from this practice and means revealing oneself as one really is with absolute honesty.

The phrase “**to come through with flying colors**” means that you have won or have greatly succeeded. When ships were victorious in battle, they would sail with their flags lifted high.

In battles on the sea, flags were generally lowered only as a mark of submission. To surrender was to lower the colors down from the mast or “**to take your flag down.**”

When a courageous captain wanted to display his intention to hold out without any thought of surrender, he would order his crew to nail the flag (*colors*) to the mast so that there would be no mistake about it.

“**Nailing your colors to the mast**” is the phrase that means that you are not submitting or surrendering. It means that you are going to display your beliefs and convictions until the very end. It means that you will remain steadfast in the face of overwhelming opposition, refusing to compromise, concede or surrender.

Sometimes a more cowardly captain would see an enemy ship and call for the colors to be lowered. Due to the risk, he would decide to conceal the ship’s real allegiance and thus be safe from attack.

How is it with you? Is the banner of Jesus flying high in your life or is it lowered in secret concealment? Where are your real colors?

They say that 90% of Christians never tell anyone about Jesus. Have you told anybody recently? Do they know whose side you’re on? Is yours a case of mistaken identity or are you boldly displaying your allegiance to the Kingdom of Heaven?

Nail it down! Fly it high!